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Kate Hartman
Senior Attorney
Mental Hygiene Legal Service
438 Main St., Ste 400
Buffalo, NY 14202

SENT VIA EMAIL TO: klhartman@nycourts.gov

Dear Ms. Hartman,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to urgently bring to your attention the distressing situation regarding my sister, Christina Little, who was admitted to the Erie County Medical Center Behavioral Health Unit on June 6, 2024.

My sister has no prior history of mental health illness and is being held against her will. It is alarming that the attending doctor, Dr. Guppenberger, is attempting to enforce medications that, from our understanding, are unnecessary and unwanted by my sister. We firmly believe that she poses no risk to herself or others and that these medications are not warranted.

In addition, my family has been in constant communication with Christina, and have personally visited my sister. Just last week, we visited Christina at ECMC with no issues. During this visit, my sister exhibited no signs or symptoms of any mental illness and behaves in a manner consistent with her normal self. However, despite having set up a visitation appointment earlier today (6/19), upon arrival, my mother and I were denied visitation at ECMC without any explanation provided. Fortunately, my family managed to document this incident, which can be listened to at the following YouTube link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cxcKzbHFeNM>

Upon information and belief, Dr. Guppenberger threatened to have Christina placed in another part/unit of the hospital to enforce medication compliance. This threat is deeply concerning to us, as it suggests coercive tactics to administer medications against her will.

The purpose of today's visit was also to deliver documentation, including a current lawsuit against Dr. Guppenberger and reviews of his practices. I have attached the lawsuit and reviews regarding Dr. Guppenberger for your reference. As you may know, Dr. Guppenberger is the doctor who has been assigned to Christina. However, to my knowledge, Dr. Guppenberger has spent less than 10 minutes actually speaking with Christina. I find the lawsuit, reviews, and the minimal time spent with Christina very concerning and disturbing.

I understand that you are representing her in the upcoming court hearing scheduled for tomorrow, June 20, 2024, seeking her discharge. However, to our concern, neither I, her brother, nor her sister or mother have been contacted by your office to provide any information or insights that could assist in her case. This lack of communication has added to our distress about her situation.

We are deeply worried about her well-being and her rights in this matter. We kindly request your immediate attention to ensure that her legal rights are upheld during tomorrow's proceedings. It is crucial that all pertinent information, including our perspectives as her family members, the documented incident of denied visitation, the alleged coercive threats by Dr. Guppenberger, and the attached documentation, are considered to make an informed decision about her care and possible discharge.

Please feel free to contact me at kevinriford@outlook.com at your earliest convenience to discuss this matter further or to obtain any necessary information from our side.

Thank you very much for your prompt attention to this urgent matter. We eagerly await your response.

Sincerely,

Kevin Riford